

Message Text

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1. HERewith FULL TEXT CHRISTIAN SCIENCE MONITOR EDITORIAL
BY HERBERT SCOVILLE JR. FRIDAY, FEBRUARY 20, HEADED, "SALT:
TAKING UP A SOVIET OFFER."

2. SECRETARY OF STATE HENRY KISSINGER RECENTLY WARNED THAT
FAILING A SATISFACTORY SALT II AGREEMENT, THE UNITED STATES
WOULD HAVE TO SPEND AN ADDITIONAL 20 BILLION DOLLARS OVER
THE NEXT FIVE YEARS ON AN ACCELERATED STRATEGIC BUILDUP.
YET IN 1972 FOLLOWING THE SUCCESSFUL SALT I NEGOTIATION,
THE SAME HENRY KISSINGER SUPPORTED FUNDING TO START THE
DEVELOPMENT OF A NEW CLASS OF STRATEGIC WEAPONS, THE SUB-
MARINE-LAUNCHED CRUISE MISSILES, AS BARGAINING CHIPS FOR
THE SUBSEQUENT SALT NEGOTIATIONS.

3. THESE SAME BARGAINING CHIPS ARE NOW A 250 MILLION DOLLAR
ITEM IN THE NEW DEFENSE BUDGET AND HAVE BECOME THE MOST
SERIOUS ROADBLOCK TO THE CONCLUSION OF ANY TREATY AT THIS
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TIME. THUS, WE SEE A STRANGE ANOMALY: SPEND MORE DOLLARS

FOR SUCCESS IN ARMS LIMITATION NEGOTIATIONS AND MORE DOLLARS IF OUR NEGOTIATORS FAIL. WIN OR LOSE, SALT IS ESCALATING COSTLY ARMS BUILDUPS.

4. SECRETARY OF DEFENSE DONALD RUMSFELD'S FINAL 1977 BUDGE FOR STRATEGIC FORCES JUMPS FROM 7.3 TO 9.4 BILLION DOLLARS DESPITE THE ASSUMPTION THAT SALT WILL SUCCEED. CAN WE AFFORD SUCH SUCCESS? FAILURE WOULD CALL FOR ADDITIONAL SPENDING. ALL THIS TALK IS PROBABLY ONLY A PLOY ON THE PART OF RUMSFELD TO SCARE CONGRESS INTO BUYING HIS CURRENT PROGRAMS AND OF KISSINGER TO SCARE THE OPPONENTS OF SALT INTO GOING ALONG WITH A NEXT-STAGE AGREEMENT.

5. RUMSFELD'S GREATEST SECURITY CONCERN IS THE ANTICIPATED VULNERABILITY OF OUR MINUTEMAN ICBMS WHEN BY THE 1980S THE RUSSIANS COULD HAVE A LARGE FORCE OF HIGH-YIELD, ACCURATE MIRVED MISSILES. HOWEVER, HIS PREDECESSOR, JAMES SCHLESINGER, HAD CONSISTENTLY POINTED OUT THE INFEASIBILITY OF ELIMINATING OUR ENTIRE FORCE OF 1,000 ICBMS BY A SOVIET FIRST STRIKE. CERTAINLY, THE SOVIET LEADERS WOULD NEVER BE ABLE TO BE SURE OF A SUCCESS -- UNRELIABILITY, UNCERTAIN ACCURACY, AND FLUCTUATIONS IN READINESS WOULD ALWAYS MAKE SUCH AN ATTACK AN UNACCEPTABLY HIGH-RISK OPERATION.

6. FURTHERMORE, HE HAD POINTED OUT THAT NO ATTACK COULD SURPRISE OUR BOMBERS AND ICBMS SIMULTANEOUSLY, AND OUR SUBMARINE DETERRENT WOULD BE SECURE REGARDLESS OF HOW VULNERABLE OUR ICBMS BECAME. BUT NOW THE DEFENSE DEPARTMENT BELIEVES WE MUST REPLACE OUR MINUTEMAN FORCE WITH A NEW GENERATION OF MISSILES, THE MX, WHICH COULD EVENTUALLY COST 20 TO 30 BILLION DOLLARS.

7. RUMSFELD WOULD PREFER TO FORESTALL ANY DANGER TO OUR ICBMS BY MUTUAL AGREEMENT, BUT WILL SALT IN ANY WAY ALLEVIATE HIS WORRIES? UNFORTUNATELY, IN THE PRESENT NEGOTIATING CONTEXT -- NO' THE VLADIVOSTOK ACCORDS OF 1974 SET A CEILING OF 1,320 ON THE NUMBER OF MIRVED MISSILES WHICH WE OR THE RUSSIANS COULD HAVE. AT THAT TIME THE RUSSIANS DIDN'T HAVE A SINGLE SUCH MISSILE AND EVEN NOW HAVE ONLY A SMALL DEPLOYED FORCE. YET, WHEN THEY REACH THE ALLOWED CEILING, WHICH WAS SET THAT HIGH SO AS

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NOT TO STOP ANY PENTAGON PROGRAMS, THEY WILL HAVE MORE THAN ENOUGH WARHEADS TO THREATEN (AT LEAST ON PAPER IF NOT IN PRACTICE) OUR MINUTEMAN FORCE.

8. THUS SALT, EVEN IF SUCCESSFUL, WILL IN NO WAY REDUCE THE DANGERS ABOUT WHICH RUMSFELD IS SO CONCERNED. THEN WHY, IF IT FAILS, WILL WE HAVE TO SPEND 20 BILLION DOLLARS MORE THAN WE ARE ALREADY SPENDING? SALT WILL HAVE NO EFFECT

ON THE CURRENT HIGH-COST ITEMS IN THE BUDGET -- THE TRIDENT,
B-1 BOMBER OR MX PROGRAMS.

9. ONLY IN THE AREA OF CRUISE MISSILES IS THERE ANY HOPE
THAT SALT CAN PROMOTE SOME RESTRAINT, BUT HERE THE US
GOVERNMENT, AND PARTICULARLY THE DEFENSE DEPARTMENT, IS
DRAGGING ITS FEET. THESE ERSTWHILE BARGAINING CHIPS
HAVE NOW DEVELOPED A MOMENTUM OF THEIR OWN, AND AS KISSINGER
HIMSELF LAMENTED WITH NAIVE DISBELIEF, "I NEVER THOUGHT THE
PENTAGON WOULD FALL IN LOVE WITH THEM."

10. THE RUSSIANS HAVE PROPOSED THAT ALL LONG-RANGE, SEA-
LAUNCHED CRUISE MISSILES BE BANNED, BUT THE DEFENSE DEPART-
MENT IS RELUCTANT DESPITE ITS FAILURE TO MAKE ANY MILITARY
CASE FOR SUCH WEAPONS. SUBMARINE-LAUNCHED CRUISE MISSILES
ARE INFERIOR TO BALLISTIC MISSILES SINCE THEIR SHORT RANGE
MAKES THE SUBMARINES MORE VULNERABLE, AND THE MISSILES CAN
BE DESTROYED BY ANTI-AIRCRAFT DEFENSES. FURTHERMORE, SINCE
THEY CAN BE FIRED FROM TORPEDO TUBES ON ANY TYPE OF SUB-
MARINE OR FROM LAUNCHERS ON ALL SURFACE VESSELS, THEY MAKE
A MOCKERY OF ANY SALT CEILINGS UNLESS THEY ARE BANNED.

11. THE RUSSIANS HAVE ALSO PROPOSED TO LIMIT AIR-LAUNCHED
CRUISE MISSILES BY CLASSIFYING ALL AIRCRAFT CARRYING THEM
AS MIRVED DELIVERY VEHICLES, THUS PUTTING THEM UNDER THE
1,320 CEILING. THIS WOULD RESTRAIN THE PROGRAM BUT STILL
ALLOW US TO PROLONG THE USEFUL LIFE OF THE B-52S, WHICH
COULD IN THE 1990S BE REPLACED BY A RELATIVELY CHEAP STAND-
OFF BOMBER. WE COULD THEN CALL A HALT TO THE INEFFICIENT
B-1 SUPERSONIC BOMBER PROGRAM; MORE THAN 1 BILLION DOLLARS
IS ASKED THIS YEAR FOR JUST THREE SUCH PLANES.

12. IF RUMSFELD AND KISSINGER ARE SERIOUS ABOUT USING
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SALT TO KEEP ESCALATING DEFENSE BUDGETS UNDER CONTROL,
THEY SHOULD BE TAKING THE NEW RUSSIAN PROPOSAL SERIOUSLY
AND NOT LOADING THE BUDGET WITH BILLIONS FOR A CRUISE-
MISSILE BARGAINING CHIP AND INEFFECTIVE B-1 BOMBER.
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